

VZCZCXRO9509
PP RUEHAST
DE RUEHVJ #1196 1461600
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 261600Z MAY 06
FM AMEMBASSY SARAJEVO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3599
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUFOAOA/USNIC SARAJEVO
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS SARAJEVO 001196

SIPDIS

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STATE FOR EUR (DICARLO), EUR/SCE (ENGLISH, FOOKS, BELL), P
(BAME), D (SMITH), NSC FOR BRAUN, OSD FOR FLORY, USNIC FOR
WEBER, GREGORIAN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [PREL](#) [BK](#)

SUBJECT: BOSNIA: ONE UNIFORM, ONE ARMED FORCE- AND ONE FUTURE

¶1. Defense Minister Radovanovic unveiled the new uniform of the unified Bosnian armed force during a ceremony on May 25. For the first time since the abolishment of the entity armies on December 31, 2005, former combatants stood shoulder to shoulder completely indistinguishable from one other. Purchased with U.S. foreign military financing (FMF), the new battle dress uniform (BDU) is modeled on the digitized woodland camouflage pattern similar to that of the U.S. Marine Corps. The local media heralded the donation as further proof of the strong ties between Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and the United States of America.

¶2. The uniforms, however, represent more than a bilateral transfer of military equipment. For the Bosnian people, they are visible proof that progress on defense reform and a multi-ethnic armed force is possible. Defense Minister Radovanovic underscored this in his closing remarks. "The new uniform is a symbol for Bosnia and Herzegovina," said Radovanovic, "it exemplifies one step farther away from our painful past and one huge step toward a better future." BiH Chief of the Joint Staff LTGEN Podzic added that "the armed force will work hard to build respect for this new uniform, which thus far has no scars on it."

MCELHANEY